

## Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 083987 TOSEC 030167

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:

SUBJECT: ADDENDUM TO BRIEFING MEMORANDUM FOR CARTER/  
TOLBERT TALKS

REF: MONROVIA 2377

1. ISSUE: MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT TOLBERT CONCERNING  
CUBAN ACTIVITIES SURROUNDING ZAIRE

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2. US OBJECTIVE: TO ASSURE MOBUTU THROUGH TOLBERT THAT  
WE SHARE HIS CONCERN ABOUT INCREASED CUBAN ACTIVITY IN  
THE COUNTRIES SURROUNDING ZAIRE, AND ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA,  
AND THAT WE BELIEVE THAT OUR SECURITY ASSISTANCE AND OTHER  
POLICIES ARE TAILORED TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO ZAIRE'S  
LEGITIMATE SECURITY REQUIREMENTS.

3. LIBERIAN OBJECTIVE: TO OBTAIN OUR VIEWS IN ORDER TO CONVEY THESE TO MOBUTU AND TO ENCOURAGE THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN COUNTERING THIS INCREASE IN CUBAN ACTIVITY.

4. ESSENTIAL FACTORS:

-- IN HIS LETTER OF MARCH 31, PRESIDENT TOLBERT RAISED THE ISSUE OF CUBAN PRESENCE IN CENTRAL AFRICA, IN

BEHALF OF PRESIDENT MOBUTU;

-- ZAIRE'S ONGOING CONCERN ABOUT THE CUBAN PRESENCE HAS BEEN HEIGHTENED RECENTLY BY (A) CROSS-BORDER INCURSIONS FROM ANGOLA BY EX-KATANGANS WHICH MAY BE RECEIVING ANGOLAN AND CUBAN SUPPORT; (B) BY STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED TO ADMINISTRATION SPOKESMEN AND REPORTED IN THE MEDIA WHICH HAVE LED MOBUTU TO FEAR THAT WE MIGHT BE ENTER-TAINING THE IDEA OF SUPPLYING ARMS TO FRONTLINE STATES; AND ABOVE ALL (C) BY THE ARRIVAL OF CUBAN REPRESENTATIVES IN BUJUMBURA MARCH 8, REPORTEDLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF OPEN-ING A CUBAN EMBASSY IN BURUNDI.

-- IN THE LATTER REGARD, ZAIRE AS WELL AS NEIGHBORING RWANDA HAVE EXPRESSED FEARS THAT BURUNDI MAY BECOME A SPRINGBOARD FOR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES AGAINST THEM,  
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DESPITE BURUNDIAN ASSURANCES THAT THE CUBANS ARE THERE ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF A SMALL EMBASSY. MOBUTU IS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT HIS EASTERN FLANK WHERE HIS AUTHORITY HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN WEAK AND A SMALL MARXIST DISSIDENT FORCE (PRP) HAS OPERATED FOR SEVERAL YEARS;

-- OUR OWN ESTIMATES ARE THAT THERE ARE 19,000 TO 20,000 CUBAN MILITARY AND SOME 3000-4000 CIVILIAN ADVISORS IN ANGOLA, AND SEVERAL HUNDRED EACH IN THE CONGO AND UGANDA. FYI. WE NOTE THAT, IN ADDITION TO

THE CAE AND RWANDA WHICH ARE MENTIONED IN THE TOLBERT LETTER, NEITHER ZAMBIA, THE SUDAN, NOR TANZANIA HAS AN IMPORTANT CUBAN PRESENCE. END FYI;

-- MOBUTU'S OVERTURE TO TOLBERT REPRESENTS THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF PROBES HE HAS MADE TO TEST THE STATUS OF US/ZAIRIAN RELATIONS. SINCE HIS FOREIGN MINISTER RETURNED FROM HIS MARCH 1-3 VISIT TO WASHINGTON, WE HAVE RECEIVED SEVERAL CLEAR SIGNALS THAT MOBUTU STILL FEELS NEGLECTED BY THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION AND INSECURE IN HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH IT. IT IS IN THIS

LIGHT THAT HIS REQUEST TO TOLBERT IS PERHAPS BEST UNDERSTOOD.

5. POINTS TO BE MADE:

-- WE APPRECIATE PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S BRINGING TO OUR ATTENTION PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S CONCERN ABOUT CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRIES BORDERING ZAIRE;

--WE WISH TO ASSURE BOTH PRESIDENT TOLBERT AND PRESIDENT MOBUTU THAT WE ARE AWARE OF THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AFRICA AND ARE WATCHING DEVELOPMENTS CLOSELY; IN THIS CONNECTION THE PRESENCE OF CUBAN TROOPS IN ANGOLA REMAINS AN IMPORTANT OBSTACLE TO OUR ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC CONFIDENTIAL

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RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA AND, IN OUR VIEW, TO A NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AMONG ANGOLAN FACTIONS;

--THE US IS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO ZAIRE'S LEGITIMATE SECURITY CONCERNS, GIVEN THE MARCH 1977 SHABA INVASION AND SUBSEQUENT GUERRILLA ACTIVITY ALONG AND ACROSS ITS SOUTHERN BORDERS; WE CONTINUE TO REGARD ZAIRE AS AN IMPORTANT AND STRATEGIC COUNTRY WITH MAJOR ROLE TO PLAY IN AFRICA; WE THEREFORE HAVE AN INTEREST IN SEEING ZAIRE REMAIN STRONG AGAINST EXTERNAL THREATS;

--THIS INTEREST IS EVIDENCED BY SUBSTANTIAL FMS AND IMET PROGRAMS IN ZAIRE (OUR LARGEST IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA) AND OUR COOPERATION WITH ZAIRE, BELGIUM AND FRANCE IN HELPING TO REORGANIZE ZAIRE'S ARMED FORCES;

--WE HOPE TO MAINTAIN THE CURRENT LEVEL OF OUR COOPERATION ON SEUCRITY MATTERS AND BELIEVE THAT THIS ASSISTANCE, AND SIMILAR EFFORTS BY ZAIRE AND OUR ALLIES, WILL ENABLE ZAIRE TO MEET ANY EXTERNAL THREAT THE CUBAN PRESENCE IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES MAY POSE. COOPER

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